

# **Horatio Bodine's Crucible Cooking Ware**



**James L. Murphy**

**Contributions to Ohio Ceramic History  
No. 4**

2010

*Grove  ucky Press*

**© 2010 James L. Murphy**

**G r o v e  u c k y P r e s s**

**Grove City, Ohio**

**Contributions to Ohio Ceramic History;**

**No. 4**



## **Contents**

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The Mystery of J. Boddeen</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Horatio R. Bodine</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>George H. and Greenbury W. Bodine</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Bodine Ware</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>25</b>



## **Introduction**

Other than a massive, gray granite monument in the Williams Cemetery west of Zanesville, Horatio Bodine's most impressive legacy is undoubtedly his coffee pot—if indeed it was his invention. As illustrated on the cover, the Bodine creation combined an attractively shaped, tapering, convex-sided stoneware body with metal spout, lid, handle, two encircling bands, and a bail handle. The only identification, partially preserved on a surprising number of the approximately half dozen examples that have been seen, is a thin paper label that reads “THE BODINE CRUCIBLE COFFEE POT.” Examples in good condition have sold for more than \$1300 at auction in the past, although the prices have fallen considerably with each new find and examples now sell for about \$200 to \$300.



Horatio R. 1826-1883  
His Wife  
Annetta Conklin 1821-1902

The paper labels aver that “Dealers will see at a glance the many advantages possessed by this Coffee Pot” and give instructions for producing “a delicious flavored drink.” They also provide a patent date, September 21, 1880, that would suggest Horatio R. Bodine was the manufacturer, although the date does not refer specifically to the coffee boiler.

### **The Mystery of J. Boddeen**

Bodine’s patented pottery is little known today, even in the Zanesville area where it was made, and matters are confused by early historical references.

Everhart (1882: 146) provides a brief mention of the pottery of “Mr. J. Boddeen, on Flint Ridge Road, one mile from the city,” one of several he vaguely documents, “of which the dating of starting, however, cannot be given.”

John Spargo (1926: 221) locates J. Bodeen in his list of potters as “near Putnam” and adds a ca. 1835 date. This date is copied by Ramsay (1939: 228),

who corrects the spelling to “Bodine,” gives dates of ca. 1836-1845, and cites two references, Spargo and Knittle (1933). Spargo does not cite a source for his dates but presumably it is Knittle, a prominent Ohio antique dealer of the time. It can only be said, based on her other articles, that Knittle’s attributions are often inaccurate and not to be trusted. In any case, in neither of her articles on Ohio ceramics does Knittle (1924, 1933) mention anyone named Boddeen, Bodeen, or Bodine. In fact, any way you spell it, there is no evidence of a Bodine in Muskingum County this early. The 1855 Bodine marriage license is currently the earliest record we have for a Bodine in Muskingum County.

### **Horatio R. Bodine**

H. R. Bodine is listed in the 1860 census as a district school teacher, with wife Annetta, children Ladore (ae 4) and George H. (ae 1) and his four step-children, Adolphus W., Cleophas, Minerva, and

Lycurgus Search. The marriage occurred in Zanesville July 10, 1855, following the death in 1851 of Annetta's first husband, potter and clock repairer Elias Search.

Horatio R. Bodine was born April 21<sup>st</sup>, 1824, the eight and youngest child of Garret and Lucy Cook Bodine, in New Jersey. According to Lawson (1903: 204) Bodine united with the Reformed Church at Readington, New Jersey, in October 1842, and was baptized the following month. Unfortunately, he has not been located in the 1850 census, although his mother appears to have been living in the household of Daniel Vliet, in Warren Co., New Jersey.

Bodine was "a bright young man" who studied Latin while a plowman, mastering the grammar in a few weeks. He is also reported to have studied medicine in Ohio, although there is no evidence that he ever practiced medicine (Lawson 1903:205). Bodine is still listed as a teacher in the 1870 census but the previous decade saw him involved in a variety of activities, including service in the Civil War from

May 2, 1864, to September 26, 1865, first in Co. D. of the 157<sup>th</sup> OVI and then as Corporal in Co. F of the 1<sup>st</sup> U. S. Engineers (1890 Veterans Schedules, E. D. 213, p. 7). This military service would have profound effects on Bodine's health (Pension Appl. 369057).

Although H. R. Bodine is listed as a teacher in the 1860 population schedules, the 1860 manufacturers schedule lists an "R. H. Bodine," manufacturer of stoneware in Falls Township as employing four men manufacturing 14,400 gallons of "commercial stoneware" per year. This is the earliest available reference to Bodine as a pottery manufacturer.

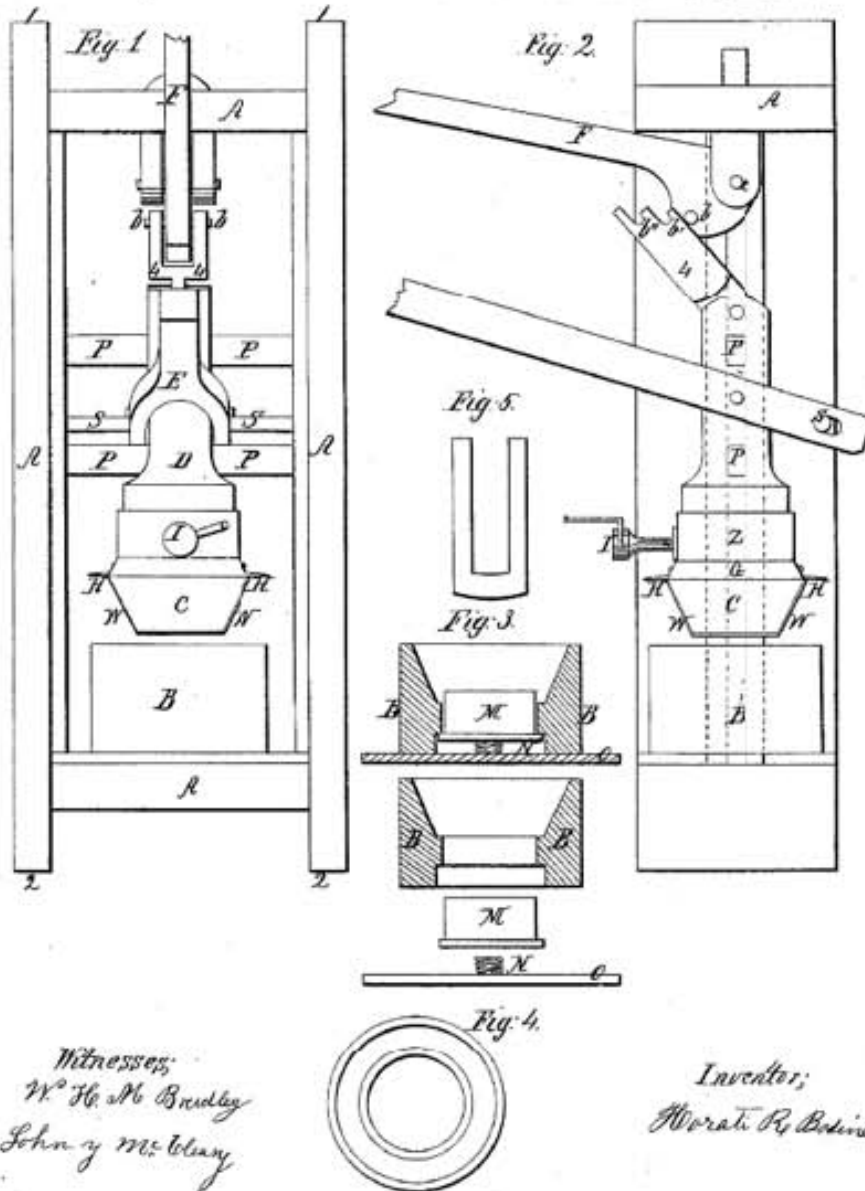
In 1866 Bodine, of Falls Township, Muskingum County, patented an "Improved Machine for Making Pottery-ware" for making jugs, jars, fruit-cans and pans by hand-power (U. S. Patent 52, 261). The aim of this machine was two-fold: to permit utilizing a stiff clay so that the mold-pressed ware would not readily lose its shape before firing and to use a wire and

*H. R. Bodine,*

*Making Pottery.*

*N<sup>o</sup> 52,261.*

*Patented Jan. 30, 1866.*



*Witnesses:*  
*W. H. M. Bradley*  
*John M. M. M.*

*Inventor:*  
*Horatio R. Bodine*

cutters around the plunger in order to detach the vessel from the mold. The invention also employed a movable bottom that reduced or eliminated the pressure created by plunging the clay into the mold; the spring-loaded movable bottom could be dropped slightly, reducing the resistance under the plunger. By using no oil to keep the plunger loose in the vessel, the formed vessel would adhere to the raised plunger and could then be loosened by the wire and cutters and easily removed. According to Bodine, this handpress could accommodate clays stiff enough to manufacture vessels as large as two gallons and these could be handled without drying.

It is not known how long Bodine used this type of press or how widely adopted it might have been. One clue is provided by his 1883 estate inventory and appraisement schedule (Case File 10898). While the actual patent was valued at only \$2.00, a note regarding royalties on his “patent crucible cooking crocks” made in the shops of various potters listed the following:



Jacob Baumgardner	5500 2 gal
John Sniff	8000 1 gal
Joe. Bell	8000 1 gal
Wm. Burley	5000 1 gal

(Whatever the amount of the royalties involved, it was supposed to cover all or part of the claim of Thos. Behm, a Zanesville wholesale grocer, so the widow Bodine got nothing from this settlement.) It is of interest that 600 gallons of “crucible cooking crocks” were sold to raise money for the support of the widow Bodine. The amount of sale was \$30.00. Also sold for this purpose was 8000 gallons of unburned ware at the shop, in poor condition; this brought Annetta Bodine an additional \$52.50, and 142 gallons of burnt ware at the kiln procured \$5.00 more.

It is not entirely clear, however, that the patent mentioned in the estate appraisal was for Bodine’s 1866 pottery press, for he had also filed a patent in 1880 for the “Manufacture of Pottery-Ware” (U. S.

Patent 232, 331) and this patent seems more likely to have been the one in question. This patent contended that formerly (“heretofore”) lead glaze had been used in cooking-ware and that the use of a non-poisonous clay slip in cooking-ware (as opposed to more highly-fired stoneware) was very desirable but required a higher firing, which resulted in a more brittle body that frequently broke when the cooking ware was heated over an open flame. It was further claimed that the addition of varying amounts of quartz sand to the clay resulted in a more porous body that would not break as readily when used in cooking. As Bodine recognized, the use of a clay slip in cooking-ware was not new. For that matter, the addition of sand to clay in order to make cooking pots strong enough to be placed over an open fire dates back to medieval and even prehistoric times; Bodine, however, appears to have been the first to patent the technique in combination with the use of a clay slip. Interestingly, his stepson Adolphus W. Search (1838-1926) was a witness on

this patent application; a teacher and Civil War veteran, Search would go on to become superintendent of Zanesville schools.

Here we have gotten a little ahead in the story, for Horatio R. Bodine did not die until September 17, 1883, debilitated by malarial fever and ague contracted near Chattanooga during the few months he served in the Civil War (U. S. Civil War Pension 3690587). His widow, Annetta, lived until 1902.

### **George H. and Greenbury W. Bodine**

George Homer Bodine, the eldest of Horatio Bodine's three sons, was born September 23, 1858, married Anna M. Brown, February 23, 1884, and had four children: Horatio Royal Adalpus (born in Chicago in 1886), Albert, Mary, and Emma. George H. Bodine is of interest here chiefly because the 1883/84 city directory lists him as "coffee pot mfr., 25 Main, bds New Zane Hotel." The same directory also lists Isabelle C. Fields, Lena Gandert, Margaret

E. George, Helena C. and Luella Armstrong as clerks with G. H. Bodine and, perhaps of more interest, Alva E. Huffman and Wm. Dunn, both listed as “tinner G. H. Bodine.” Employing two tanners and five clerks would suggest a considerable business. It is not listed, however, in the 1885 and 1887 Zanesville directories while the Bodine family presumably was in Chicago. In September, 1889, Bodine’s “crockery” establishment is shown on the Sanborn fire insurance map, along the canal, at the intersection of South Third and Water St. The 1890 directory provides an advertisement for G. H. Bodine & Co., still located at the Third and South Streets address, but by 1892 he is listed as a brickmaker. (By 1890 Alva E. Huffman was working for the Ohio Iron Co. and the other known employees cannot be located after 1883/84.) The 1893 Burch’s Zanesville directory lists George H. Bodine as “with” Harris & Bro., which was a major Zanesville paving brick manufacturer. Significantly, George’s brother Greenbury W. Bodine is listed as a potter, living with their mother on Ridge Avenue in West Zanesville.

# G. H. Bodine & Co.,

Manufacturers and Sole Controllers of

## **BODINE**

→\*PATENT\*←

### COOKING CROCKS,

**Coffee Pots,**

**Bean Pots,**

**Griddles,**

**Milk Boilers, &c.**



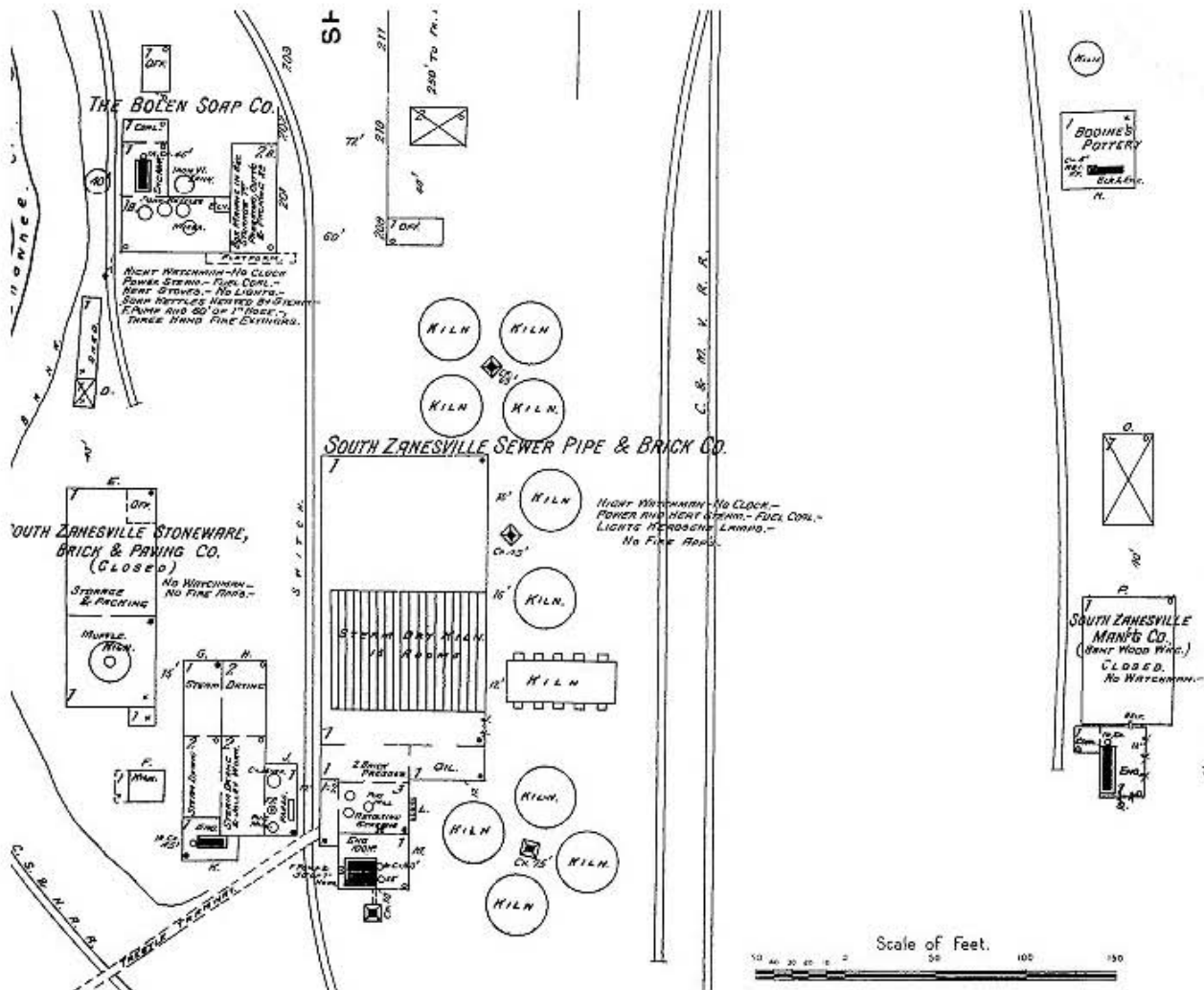
Office and Works, cor. Third and South Streets, Zanesville, Ohio.

(1890 Zanesville Directory, Burch & Co.)

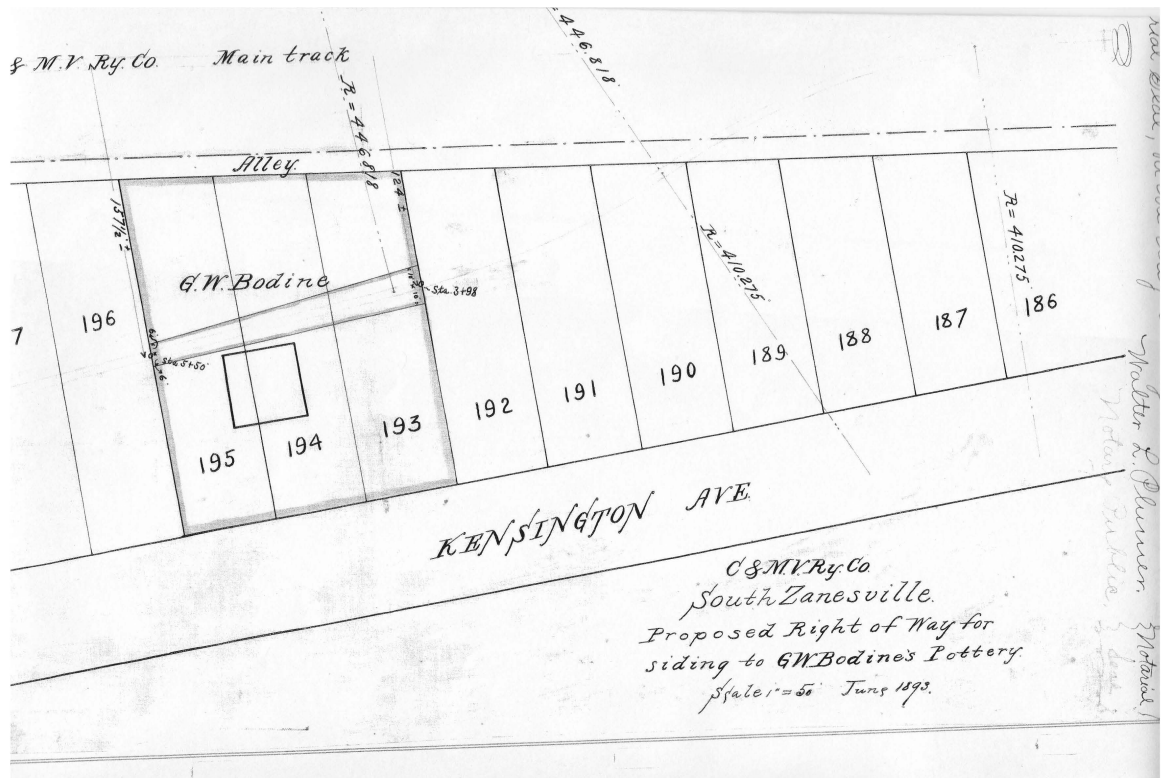
Greenbury presumably is the "& Co." in the Bodine & Co. of Zanesville. On March 20, 1893, Greenbury purchased three lots (193-195) in South Zanesville but sold these to his mother Annetta April 9, 1894. This is the location of the Bodine & Co. pottery indicated on the 1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map but

from 1894 to 1897 George H. Bodine is listed as superintendent of the Buckeye Press Brick Co., in Roseville, Ohio, although his residence remained in Zanesville. While employed by the Buckeye Press Brick Co., Bodine patented a unique building block design (U. S. Design Patent 25044, patented January 7, 1896), but no examples of this type of building block are known.

Greenbury Bodine died in the fall of 1896, although it is possible that operation of the pottery ended before this, by the time he sold the property to Annette Bodine in 1894 or even earlier. Confirmation that the Bodine Pottery as shown on the 1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, to the east of the Columbus & Muskingum Valley railroad and opposite the South Zanesville Sewer Pipe and Brick Co., between Kensington Avenue and a railroad spur, was actually operated by him, is found in the deed record for the railroad siding right-of-way. Dated July 7, 1893, the accompanying map accurately locates the "G W Bodine Pottery" straddling Lots 194 and 195 in South



(1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map)



Zanesville. No trace of this small pottery now exists at the site and it probably did not operate after Greenbury sold the property to Annetta in 1894, certainly not after his death in late 1896. By 1900 George H. Bodine is listed as a “contractor” in the federal census. Following his mother’s death, virtually all of the Bodine family left Zanesville, although his sister Mary Bodine Abele remained. She administered Annetta’s estate upon her death in 1902 and was the sole beneficiary of the will.



George H. Bodine of Bodine & Co., is listed as a contractor in 1905 in the Carrick neighborhood of Pittsburgh but he is not listed in the following year. In 1910 his widow Anna and children are still living in Carrick, but she and son Royal moved to Santa Barbara Co., California, sometime between 1920 and 1930.

### **Bodine Ware**

Examples of Bodine pottery are far from common today. In actual numbers, more examples of the Bodine Crucible Coffeepot have been seen than any

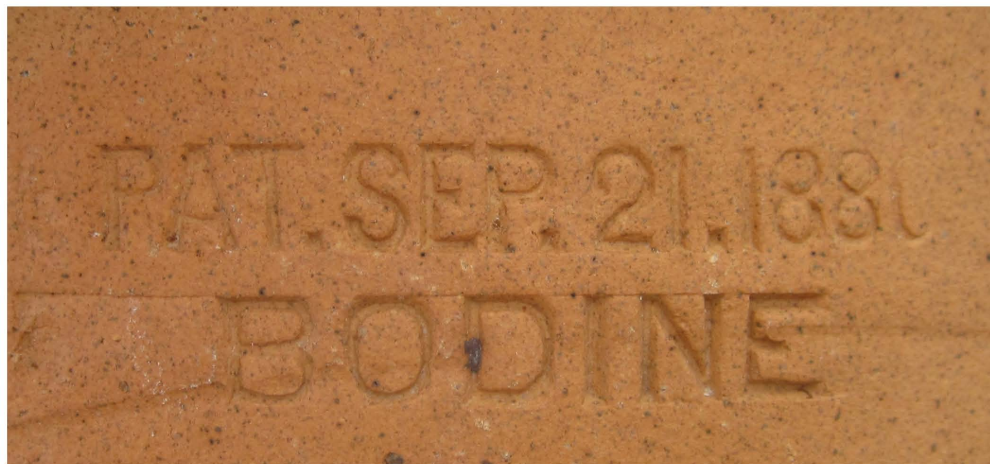


other Bodine product, perhaps understandable when we realize that it was produced for at least seven years in the 1880s and 1890s and perhaps longer, but after H. R. Bodine's death. Yet, the appraisement record at the time of H. R. Bodine's death indicates substantial numbers of "patent crucible cooking crocks" being manufactured, presumably with the Bodine name on them but perhaps not.



Base of "BODINE" Crock.  
(Note faint central boss)

Two such crocks are available, one 10 ½ inches in diameter, with the patent date impressed, while a smaller one, 8 ¼ inches in diameter, lacks the patent date and has the name “BODINE” somewhat crudely



incised on the side. It seems likely that the smaller one is the earlier, probably made before the 1880 patent was issued, although the paste does contain significant amounts of grit or sand. The larger crock has two opposed recesses under the rim, designed for a metal bail handle. Both have an Albany slip interior and unglazed exterior.



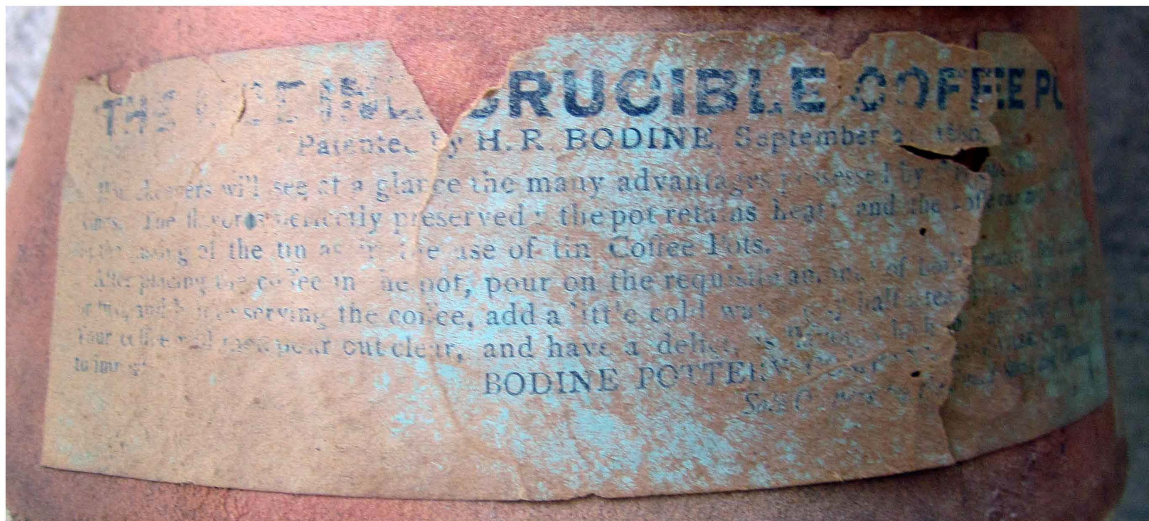
A third piece marked with the 1880 patent date is a small pitcher or pipkin with strap handle, showing considerable signs of use, including several hairlines, chips, and an accumulation of burned, encrusted crud.



Four Inch High Bodine Pipkin

Clearly Bodine's coffee pot, though not impressed with the 1880 patent date, was manufactured after this patent was granted, for the existing paper labels display the date rather prominently. There is, however,

no evidence that it was manufactured prior to that date, although that is certainly a possibility. And, of course, the 1880 patent does not refer to the coffee pot but to the practice of including sand in the clay. A very real possibility is that H. R. Bodine never produced the coffee boiler and that it was created by George H. Bodine during the last few years of his father's life.



An equally perplexing question that cannot be answered at this point concerns precisely what was made at Greenbury W. Bodine's pottery in South Zanesville. Further ambiguity is created by an example of Bodine's Crucible Coffee Pot on which the label specifies "THE MUSKINGUM POTTERY CO.," for

while there was a Muskingum Pottery Co. producing stoneware in nearby Crooksville, Ohio, this was years after the Bodines, and for that matter there are no contemporary references to either a Muskingum Pottery Co. or to a Bodine Pottery Co. Nor does there seem to be any relationship with the Muskingum *Stoneware* Co. located in Putnam. Precise available dates for the coffee boiler are 1883-1890, though it may have been produced earlier by H. R. and G. H. Bodine and later by son Greenbury Bodine (possibly under the aegis of the “Muskingum Pottery Co.”) ca 1893-94.

Although it would be fun to think that H. R. Bodine got the inspiration for his crucible coffee pot by sitting around a Civil War camp fire while a pot of strong chicory was brewing, the brevity of his stint in the Union before being felled by malaria makes this romantic scenario very unlikely, and documentary evidence strongly indicates that it was a creation of his son George H. Bodine. Certainly it seems to have been primarily George who was known as the “coffee pot maker,” and testimony indicates that H. R. Bodine





never recovered sufficient health “to do much work any of the time ... often unable to be up and around” (Nathan Yocum, April 14 and August 15, 1888).

## **Conclusions**

Much remains unknown about Horatio R. Bodine’s career as a potter. Greater effort should be made to locate remnants of his early pottery on the Flint Ridge Road as well as that of his father-in-law, Elias Search, located nearby. Currently we have no idea of what “early” Bodine ware was like and whether he actually produced the Crucible Coffee Pot. Likewise, cursory examination of the site of Greenbury Bodine’s “late” pottery in South Zanesville yielded no traces of Bodine ware, and the site has been heavily impacted by deposition of waster garden pottery, presumably from the nearby Burley Clay Co., so that we do not really know what was made there. And, archaeologically, the “middle” Bodine period (1883-1890) when the coffee boilers were known to be manufactured by George H. Bodine on the canal, remains unstudied, as the site at the corner of Third and Canal St. in downtown Zanesville is currently an asphalt parking lot.



## References

Burch, N. H. & Co.

1890    *Zanesville City and Muskingum County Directory for 1890-91.* Beacon Publ. Co., Akron, Ohio.

Everhart, J. F.

1882    *History of Muskingum County, Ohio, with illustrations and biographical sketches of prominent men and pioneers.* A. A. Graham, Columbus, Ohio.

Lawson, Publius V.

1903    *Family Genealogy.* Menasha, Wisc. P. V. Lawson.

Knittle, Rhea M.

1933    Ohio Pottery Jars and Jugs. *The Magazine Antiques* October 1933.

Lawson, Publius V.

- 1903 *Family Genealogy: Family genealogy: Baird, Blair, Butler, Cook, Childs, Clark, Cole, Crane, De Kruyft, Edwards, Finney, Fleming, Graves, Grandine, Haney, Hitchcock, Kerwin, Lawson, Lowry, McAlpin, Peper, Richardson, Rittenhouse, Southwood, Stolp, Williams and Wright. Menasha, Wisc.: Lawson.*

Ramsay, John

- 1939 *American Potters and Pottery.* Hale, Cushman & Flint, Clinton, Mass.

Spargo, John

- 1926 *Early American Pottery and China.* The Century Co., New York. 1948 reprint, Garden City Publishing Co., New York.